1. (Amended) A method for facilitating a chat session between a first user and a second user visiting a first web site, comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user, a co-branded community to which the user belongs and an address of a first web site being visited by the first user;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user, a second co-branded community to which the second user belongs and the address of the first web site;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID and the second co-branded community;

receiving, from the first user, a request to open one of a public chat session, a semi-public chat session and a private chat session with the second user;

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested one of the public chat session, the semi-public chat session and the private chat session; and

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the chat session designated by the first user.

Please add the following new claims 5-14:

5. (New) A method for facilitating a real-time chat session between a first user and a second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an

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address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receiving, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session with the second user;

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested the semi-public chat session; and

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session designated by the first user.

6. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the semi-public chat session is visible only to users having a predetermined user profile.

7. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the providing step further comprises:

receiving, from the first user, a query for information regarding other users visiting the first web site; and

searching a user database to determine which users are visiting the first web site.

8. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the query includes a request for other users

having predetermined personal data.

9. (New) A computer-readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for facilitating a chat session between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receiving, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session with the second user;

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested the semi-public chat session; and

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session designated by the first user.

10. (New) An apparatus for facilitating a semi-public chat session between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory storing processing instructions for controlling the processor, the processor

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operative with the processing instructions to:

receive, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receive, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

provide, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receive, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session with the second user;

transmit, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested the semi-public chat session; and

receive, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session designated by the first user.

11. (New) A method for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method, comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID; and

receiving, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user.

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12. (New) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested a communication; and

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to receive a communication from the first user.

13. (New) A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for performing a method for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID; and

receiving, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user.

14. (New) An apparatus for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the apparatus comprising:

a processor; and

a memory storing processing instructions for controlling the processor, the processor

operative with the processing instructions to:

receive, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receive, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

provide, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receive, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user; and

provide to the second user an address for communicating with the second user.